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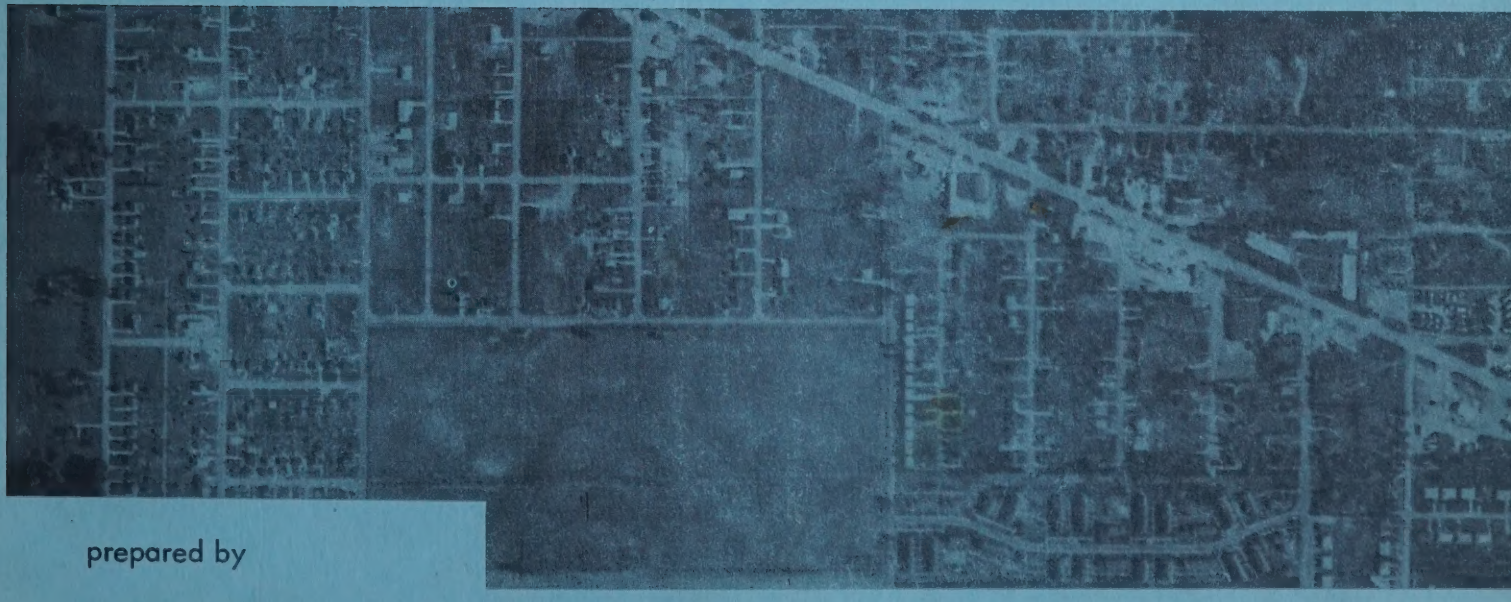
ROCK FALLS ILLINOIS

COMPREHENSIVE CITY PLAN



prepared by

EVERT KINCAID AND ASSOCIATES, INC., PLANNING CONSULTANTS, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

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COMPREHENSIVE CITY PLAN

ROCK FALLS, ILLINOIS

February, 1963

Prepared For

THE ILLINOIS STATE HOUSING BOARD
(Official State Planning Agency)
TEMPLE McFAYDEN, CHAIRMAN

Prepared By

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Planning Consultants
22 West Madison Street
Chicago 2, Illinois

The preparation of this report was financed in part by an urban planning grant from the Housing and Home Finance Agency, under the provisions of Section 701 of the Housing Act of 1954, as amended.

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EVERT KINCAID AND ASSOCIATES, INC. . . Consultants

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February 1, 1963

Rock Falls Plan Commission
Mr. Ben Jokerst, Jr., Chairman
City Hall
Rock Falls, Illinois

Gentlemen:

We take pleasure in transmitting to you the final report of the comprehensive planning program, which was financed in part by the Federal Government's planning assistance program for small communities. This report is in actuality a comprehensive updating of the plan prepared for Rock Falls in 1953 and 1954.

The plan reflects the many changes that have occurred in Rock Falls in both the residential and business community and provides plans for its future. It is interesting to note the considerable improvement that has been brought about by the planning process, a dedicated administrative body, and the support and understanding of the citizens of Rock Falls. This improvement is evidenced by the change in quality of housing from the 40 to 45 percent substandard condition that existed in 1950 to the present indication by the U. S. Census of 1960 that only 14 percent of housing is presently substandard.

This revised plan presents a further challenge to the community in working toward an even better place in which to live and work. It is our firm conviction that the proposed program is sound and with the continued effort on the part of the participating bodies and support by the citizens, the plans for future growth and development in Rock Falls will be realized.

The cooperation extended by the public officials and individual citizens during the planning program is greatly appreciated. It is hoped that the publication and distribution of this report will aid the community in its efforts in the coming years.

Respectfully submitted,

EVERT KINCAID AND ASSOCIATES, INC.

Wm. S. Lawrence,
President

WSL/pet

INDUSTRIAL DISTRICTS INSTITUTIONAL PLANS PARK & RECREATIONAL PLANS LAND USE SURVEYS CEMETERIES
THOROUGHFARE PLANS NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLANS SHOPPING CENTER PLANS

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FOREWORD

By 1980 the population of Rock Falls may be 19,500 to 24,000. This population increase means new families, provision of new home sites, extension and improvement of utilities, and all the other amenities necessary to a growing and dynamic City. To accomplish the orderly and compatible development of the community, beneficial controls must be exercised over the future growth or the result will be chaotic.

Much has been done in Rock Falls during the past years to bring order to the growth and redevelopment of the community. The City has adopted a Workable Program, which is an administrative vehicle for the continued growth and redevelopment of the corporate City. An Urban Renewal project has been instituted and is well on the road to execution. A civic center site has been selected and a bond issue passed for the development of new City offices, and police and fire facilities. New utilities have been constructed in various parts of the community thereby improving the standard of housing and providing better living amenities for the citizens of Rock Falls. These represent giant steps in the process of creating better government, city services and an improved community.

Much more lies ahead. With the potential of growth and development in the City of Rock Falls there is created a challenge to the business community to provide for the development and redevelopment of retail and service businesses so that Rock Falls may enjoy greater business prosperity and capture its fair share of the spendable income within its trade area.

On the one hand, Rock Falls has lost a major industrial unit in the closing of the International Harvester plant. But at the same time new industries are locating in the community and because of the excellent industrial climate, good industrial sites, excellent transportation and a surplus of labor, Rock Falls can look forward to further and more intensive industrial growth.

The type, quality and location of new industrial concerns is of vital importance in preparing plans for the future, and site selection should be carefully controlled through the various aspects of the community plan.

The first step to redevelopment of the older, less desirable areas of the City has been taken with the initiation of the Urban Renewal Project. Other projects are needed and should be programmed as early as possible. Redevelopment of the central area is just as vital as new growth on the periphery of the corporate

area and the economic health of the community will be dependent to a considerable extent on the success of the redevelopment of these older areas.

The plans and proposals presented herein are not considered to be the full answer to all present and future problems of the community. There will be a need for some modification as development takes place. The plan does, however, provide a framework of recommendations and a program of action which should greatly assist in the creation of a community wherein the residents can enjoy a full and healthful life in a pleasant environment.

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BACKGROUND HISTORY

Rock Falls and its twin city of Sterling are in the northwest part of Illinois about 110 miles west of Chicago. They lie on the Rock River--midway between Rock Island and Rockford. Both cities are in Whiteside County only a few miles west of the Lee County line.

Rock Falls and Sterling were originally settled in the wave of migration that swept westward over the Mississippi Valley in the early part of the 19th century. There was considerable hope for above-average economic growth in the light of the steamboat traffic which it was felt would develop on the Rock River. Located just above a rapids, the site had the additional advantage of available water power.

As early as 1837, Rapid City (now Rock Falls) was laid out at the place where it was anticipated a canal would lead traffic on the Rock River around the rapids to the Tri-Cities and the Mississippi River. The canal was started in 1839 but fell victim to the economic depression of the early 1840's. As a result there was little subsequent population growth in the area, and Rapid City disappeared temporarily as an incorporated community. In 1856, however, the Galena and Chicago Union Railroad (now part of the Chicago and North Western) entered the area on a line extending westward through Clinton, Iowa. Sterling was incorporated as a city in 1857, and about ten years later Rock Falls was incorporated.

The first dam to take advantage of the rapids was built in 1854 by the Sterling Hydraulic Company. It supplied cheap power to a number of small industries built during the 1860's and 1870's. Subsequently, the Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy Railroad penetrated the communities.

In 1907 the Illinois-Mississippi Canal was opened. Together with a feeder canal it linked the Rock River at Rock Falls with the Illinois River near LaSalle and the Mississippi River near the Tri-Cities. While giving a temporary boost to the development of Rock Falls and Sterling, the canal system rapidly became obsolete and has long since lost its economic significance. It was the dam built for the feeder canal that backed up the Rock River to form Sinnissippi Lake.

The two cities have continued to develop. In recent years, Rock Falls has enjoyed greater population growth and housing improvement than Sterling but it has lost ground industrially and commercially.

THE ECONOMIC BASE

INDUSTRY

Although the primary concern of this report is with the City of Rock Falls, it is necessary to recognize that a discussion of the City's economic base, in particular, cannot be separated from that of the neighboring city of Sterling. The two cities are so closely linked that any industrial expansion or contraction in one is quickly and deeply felt in employment, retail sales, and other measures of its population's well-being in the other. A look at the maps in this report reveals that many residents of Rock Falls are much closer to employment centers in Sterling than in their own city. The versatility and near-universal use of the automobile in the last two decades has even made proximity to the job far less important in where a worker lives than it had in the past. It can be understood, therefore, how this mutual interest of the two cities has led to joint efforts in community development and industrial expansion in recent years.

Both communities rely on the production of fabricated metal products to provide their principal manufacturing employment. The largest employer, the Northwestern Steel and Wire Company, produces rods, wire and wire products, plates and structural steel, and merchant bar mill products. Although the mills are in Sterling, there is a substantial warehousing operation in Rock Falls, and a large number of the company's 3,000 employees live and pay taxes in Rock Falls. Another 200 workers are expected to be added to the company payroll as a result of the new $13 million structural and plate mill in Sterling which began operations in 1962.

The International Harvester plant in Rock Falls, which for many years was the second largest employer in the area, closed down the last of its operations in August, 1961. This loss of some 500 jobs was only fractionally offset by the purchase and use of several abandoned I-H buildings for the expanded manufacturing and warehousing operations of the Geyer Tool Division of the Wood Shovel and Tool Company. Fortunately, several new industrial plants had been built in the past six years in the area southeast of the City along U. S. Route 30. These plants, incidentally, adjoin the city-sponsored Industrial Park, discussed later in this report, which has been established for attracting other manufacturers to Rock Falls.

Among the City's manufacturing establishments are two industrial fastener plants, a bolt, nut and rivet plant, a steel forging mill, two reinforcing wire-mesh fabricators, a metal hose plant, a firm producing electronically controlled doors, and a plant for making custom ambulances and hearses.

Reports of the Illinois State Employment Service show that total employment in the major industrial firms of Rock Falls and Sterling has been on a gradual downward trend in the last several years. This decline in manufacturing employment has been somewhat greater among women than among the working force as a whole. The eventual reversing of this trend can probably be expected only if ventures such as the Industrial Park are successful. Meanwhile, the temporary construction jobs connected with the new mill in Sterling have been a cushion in recent months. The carrying out of the various public works and highway improvement plans itemized in the Capital Improvements Program will also add substantially to the City's employment.

According to the 1958 U. S. Census of Manufactures, Rock Falls' industries employed only 1,244, or 26 percent, of the two cities' 4,872 manufacturing workers. They accounted for only 22 percent of the value added by manufacture (see Table 1 below). The closing of the International Harvester plant has now reduced these proportions to less than 20 percent.

There is considerable non-manufacturing activity in Rock Falls aside from purely retail enterprises and government operations. There are several meat packing plants and grain and feed processing and storage facilities. In addition, the City's position at the junction of Illinois Route 88 and U. S. Route 30, a major transcontinental highway, has brought a number of contract and common carrier truck operators into the City. Construction firms also make a substantial contribution to the City's economy.

TABLE 1

COMPARISON OF MANUFACTURING,

ROCK FALLS AND STERLING 1958

	Number of Establishments	Number of Employees	Value Added By Manufacture
Rock Falls	15 (37%)	1,244 (26%)	$15,489,000 (22%)
Sterling	25 (63%)	3,628 (74%)	53,941,000 (78%)
TOTAL	40	4,872	$69,430,000

Source: U. S. Census of Manufactures, 1958.

RETAIL ACTIVITY

Historically, retail trade in the Twin City area has been dominated by Sterling--it has been to Sterling that major drug, food, department store, and mail-order chains have gone first to begin operations. Although Rock Falls has about 40 percent of the cities' combined population, its merchants get barely 20 percent of the total retail sales. As Table 2 shows, in only three types of retail establishments--eating and drinking places, gasoline service stations, and lumber, building materials and hardware outlets--was Rock Falls' share proportionate to its population.

TABLE 2

COMPARISON OF RETAIL SALES BY TYPE OF ESTABLISHMENT,

ROCK FALLS AND STERLING, 1961

	Retail Sales ($1,000's)*			
Type of Establishment	Total	Sterling	Rock Falls	Rock Falls' Percent of Total
Food Stores	$11,970	$ 9,370	$2,600	21.7
Eating and Drinking Places	2,580	1,410	1,170	45.4
General Merchandise	5,050	4,800	250	5.0
Apparel	2,920	2,620	300	10.3
Furniture, Household Appliances	1,740	1,180	560	32.1
Automotive	7,330	6,730	590	8.0
Gas Stations	3,850	2,350	1,510	39.2
Lumber, Building Materials, Hardware	2,200	1,260	940	42.7
Drugs	1,060	920	140	13.2
TOTAL**	$41,610	$33,110	$8,500	20.4

*Estimates, based on 1958 U. S. Census of Business.
**Includes establishments not in above types.

A Consumer-Retailer Survey made in 1960 for the Rock Falls Chamber of Commerce pointed out the need for higher quality and more complete lines of merchandise in the City's shops. Along this line it was found that there was a shortage of certain types of retail outlets such as department, variety and dry-goods stores. These findings are supported by the data in Table 2, which show that Rock Falls had only 5 percent of the Twin Cities' $5 million in sales at general merchandise establishments and only 10 percent of the $2.9 million in sales at apparel stores. Sales of automobiles and at drug stores were also unnaturally low. Even food stores had barely half of the sales due them.

A comparison of 1961 data with those of 1955 (see Tables 2 and 3) gives some encouragement for sales at general merchandise, apparel, and household furnishings shops, and at eating and drinking places.

TABLE 3

COMPARISON OF RETAIL SALES BY TYPE OF ESTABLISHMENT,

ROCK FALLS AND STERLING, 1955

	Retail Sales ($1,000's)*			
Type of Establishment	Total	Sterling	Rock Falls	Rock Falls' Percent of Total
Food Stores	$ 9,790	$ 6,860	$2,930	29.9
Eating and Drinking Places	2,350	1,400	940	40.0
General Merchandise	4,120	3,970	140	3.4
Apparel	3,170	3,050	120	3.8
Furniture, Household Appliances	1,830	1,350	480	26.2
Automotive	8,640	7,850	790	9.1
Gas Stations	2,660	1,480	1,190	44.7
Lumber, Building Materials, Hardware	2,270	1,290	980	43.2
Drugs	1,040	710	340	32.7
TOTAL**	$38,340	$30,230	$8,120	21.2

*Estimates, based on 1954 U. S. Census of Business.
**Includes establishments not in above types.

This has been countered, however, by a sag in sales at food stores, drug stores, and gas stations. Table 4 shows that the retail economy as a whole has been relatively steady for a number of years, but at such a low level that actual sales, for example, are less than in nearby Morrison, a city not even half the size of Rock Falls (see Table 5).

TABLE 4

CHANGES IN RELATIVE STANDING OF TOTAL RETAIL SALES, ROCK FALLS, 1948-1961

	Total Retail Sales ($1,000s)			
	1948	1954	1958	1961*
Rock Falls	$ 5,221	$ 7,387	$ 7,912	$ 8,500
Rock Falls-Sterling	$24,500	$34,211	$38,828	$41,610
Percent in Rock Falls	21.3	21.6	20.4	20.4
Whiteside County	44,174	58,477	73,238	77,550
Percent in Rock Falls	11.8	12.6	10.8	11.0

*Estimates

Source: U. S. Census of Business.

TABLE 5

COMPARISON OF PER CAPITA RETAIL SALES IN WHITESIDE COUNTY, 1958

	1960 Population	1958 Retail Sales	
		Amount	Per Capita*
Rock Falls	10,261	$ 7,912,000	$ 770
Sterling	15,688	30,916,000	1,970
Rock Falls-Sterling	25,949	38,828,000	1,550
Morrison	4,159	8,745,000	2,100
Fulton	3,387	3,781,000	1,120
Whiteside County	59,887	73,238,000	1,220

*1958 retail sales per 1960 population.

Source: U. S. Censuses of Population and Business.

Future retail sales in Rock Falls would probably increase by only $150,000 to $200,000 per year if they were to stay at the present per capita level and get no more than the present 20 percent share of the Twin City total. At the end of ten years total sales would barely exceed $10,000.000.

It is apparent, however, that a ready market does exist for a much greater expansion in the City's retail trade. If Rock Falls could raise its proportion of the Twin Cities' market from an estimated 20 percent in 1962 to, say, 30 percent by 1972, total sales would reach an estimated $15,300,000 (see Table 6). This would be an increase of from $550,000 to $800,000, or 6.5 percent, per year. It would eat up half the disproportion between Rock Falls' population and retail sales. The extra $5,000,000 that would change hands in the City's shops would obviously be felt both in increased employment and increased tax revenues.

TABLE 6

PROJECTED RETAIL SALES FOR ROCK FALLS,

1962-1972

Year	Estimated Retail Sales*		Percent Rock Falls of Total
	Rock Falls-Sterling**	Rock Falls	
1962	$42,380,000	$ 8,500,000	20.0
1963	43,160,000	9,050,000	21.0
1964	43,955,000	9,650,000	22.0
1965	44,765,000	10,300,000	23.0
1966	45,590,000	10,950,000	24.0
1967	46,430,000	11,600,000	25.0
1968	47,290,000	12,300,000	26.0
1969	48,165,000	13,000,000	27.0
1970	49,055,000	13,750,000	28.0
1971	49,960,000	14,500,000	29.0
1972	50,885,000	15,300,000	30.0

*1961 dollars.

**Based on projected population increase of 1.85 percent per year (See Population Projection on page 13).

This ten year forecast is, of course, highly conditional, and depends both on the general health of the national economy and on the foresight of local leaders. It should be apparent, therefore, that unless the urgency of planning and developing new and improved retail facilities in Rock Falls is recognized, there can be little doubt that an already bad situation will deteriorate further.

POPULATION

Rock Falls had a population of 10,261 in 1960, a 28.5 percent increase over that of 1950. This continued a pattern of rapid growth, as revealed in Table 7, in which the City grew from only 3,893 in 1930, or 157 percent. The peak growth rate was attained in the 1940s and, as careful mid-decade estimates show, in the early 1950s. Decade after decade, Rock Falls has consistently led Sterling as well as Whiteside County as a whole.

TABLE 7

COMPARATIVE POPULATION GROWTH IN WHITESIDE COUNTY

1930-1960

	1960	1950	1940	1930
Rock Falls "Metropolitan Area"*	13,911	10,132	7,142	4,845
Percent Increase	37.3	41.9	47.4	-
Rock Falls City	10,261	7,983	4,987	3,893
Percent Increase	28.5	60.0	28.0	-
Sterling "Metropolitan Area"**	19,458	15,467	13,310	11,227
Percent Increase	25.8	16.2	18.6	-
Sterling City	15,688	12,817	11,363	10,012
Percent Increase	24.0	13.0	14.0	-
Whiteside County	59,887	49,336	43,338	39,019
Percent Increase	21.4	14.0	11.0	-
Sterling-Rock Falls Combined "Metropolitan Areas"	33,369	25,599	20,452	16,072
Percent in Rock Falls "Metropolitan Area"	41.7	39.6	34.9	30.3

*Comprises Coloma Township plus estimate for Section 2 of Montmorency Township.

**Comprises Sterling Township.

SOURCE: U. S. Census of Population.

The excess of births over deaths, as against in-migration, has accounted for a relatively large portion of the City's growth. This can be accounted for by the high fertility ratio*, which in 1960 was 585 for Rock Falls compared with 475 for all urban places in Illinois. Consequently Rock Falls' birth rate has been an extremely high 30 to 37 in recent years (see Table 8). This contrasts sharply with that for the whole state, which ranged between 21 and 25. The dynamics of the City's population growth is also revealed in the average family size (population per household) of 3.54, far greater than the 3.17 for Sterling or 3.18 for the state as a whole.

TABLE 8

BIRTHS AND DEATHS, ROCK FALLS, 1950-1960

	Resident Births	Birth Rate1/	Resident Deaths	Excess of Births Over Deaths	Mid-year Population2/
1950	260	32.5	81	179	8,000
1951	307	36.6	79	228	8,400
1952	296	33.6	106	190	8,800
1953	316	34.7	81	235	9,100
1954	300	31.9	75	225	9,400
1955	311	32.4	93	218	9,600
1956	312	31.8	89	223	9,800
1957	321	32.1	85 2/	236 2/	10,000
1958	314 2/	31.1	85 2/	229 2/	10,100
1959	312	30.6	81	231	10,200
1960	310 2/	30.1	85 2/	225 2/	10,300
Total April 1, 1950- April 1, 1960 3/	3,062		855	2,207	

1/ Per 1,000 estimated mid-year population.
2/ Estimate.
3/ Prorated.

*The fertility ratio is the number of children under five years of age per 1,000 women 15 to 49 years of age.

a remarkable characteristic of Rock Falls' population is its extreme youth. Table 9 shows that more than 42 percent are under the age of 18, considerably greater than in Sterling or the county.

The median age is only 24.3 years while that for the whole state is 31.2.

TABLE 9

POPULATION DISTRIBUTION BY AGE GROUPS

	Under 18 Years	18 to 64 Years	65 Years and Over	Total
Rock Falls				
1960 Population	4,318	5,199	744	10,261
Percent of Total Population	42.1	50.7	7.3	100.0
Percent Increase Over 1950	48.0	12.0	43.0	28.5
Sterling				
1960 Population	5,797	8,257	1,634	15,688
Percent of Total Population	37.0	52.6	10.4	100.0
Percent Increase Over 1950	56.0	8.0	15.0	24.0
Whiteside County				
1960 Population	23,399	30,830	5,658	59,887
Percent of Total Population	39.1	51.5	9.4	100.0
Percent Increase Over 1950	45.0	8.0	23.0	21.4

Source: U. S. Census of Population.

The growth of Rock Falls in the 1950's came entirely in areas south of U. S. Route 30 that were annexed from Coloma Township. Within its 1950 area Rock Falls actually lost population (see Table 10). This occurrence is quite common for cities with so little vacant area within their limits that substantial growth can only be achieved through adding to their area. Homes are built and population also increases in adjoining areas that are not annexed. Thus the real population of the geographic, as against the political, city is almost always undercounted and the available statistics usually distort the actual story of population growth.

Any realistic assessment of Rock Falls' population growth must, therefore, include all adjoining and tributary built-up areas, even though they are outside the City limits.

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TABLE 10

POPULATION IN ANNEXED AREAS,

ROCK FALLS AND STERLING

1950-1960

	1960 Population			1950 Population Total	Population Increase, 1950-1960, In 1950 Area
	Total	In 1950 Area	In Annexed Area		
Rock Falls	10,261	7,809	2,452	7,983	-174
Sterling	15,688	13,564	2,124	12,817	747

Source: U. S. Census of Population.

Census data from such a "metropolitan area" is not available for Rock Falls or any other small city. Yet, by careful analysis, an adequate approximation can be worked out. Thus, the Rock Falls "metropolitan area" can be reasonably assumed to include all of Coloma Township plus Section 2 (which includes Yeoward's Addition) in Montmorency Township. The Rock River provides a convenient although artificial separation from a similar "metropolitan area" around Sterling.

The rate of growth for the Rock Falls "metropolitan area" has almost consistently led Coloma Township, the city proper, Sterling, or Whiteside County. Rock Falls and vicinity now contains almost 42 percent of the population in the combined Sterling-Rock Falls "metropolitan areas" compared with barely 30 percent in 1930 (see Table 7).

There can be no doubt that Rock Falls has exhibited a continuing and unmatched vitality in the past. The big question now is to determine, insofar as is possible, what the City's future growth pattern will be. During the latter part of the 1950's there was a marked slowing of population growth. Primarily the result of industrial stagnation there was a virtual stop in migration from the rural areas and the beginnings of a substantial outflow of young adults looking for jobs in the large metropolitan areas.

Long-range population forecasts can normally be projected on the basis of past growth trends and current fertility ratios. A skyrocketing population could thus be predicted for Rock Falls. The

present economic climate, however, would make this practice rather foolhardy, especially in the short run. If the Rock Falls "metropolitan area" population does grow, say, 33 percent during the 1960's (a reasonable extension of the growth trends shown in Table 7), it would reach about 18,100 in 1970 and 24,000 in 1980. A more conservative projection, based on the national increase of 18.5 percent during the 1950's, would place the area population at about 16,500 in 1970 and 19,500 in 1980 from 13,911 in 1960. Obviously these projections are worthless statistical manipulations unless they are part of a comprehensive plan for rejuvenating the City's economy--and furnishing these large numbers of people with the means of earning a livelihood.

HOUSING

The condition of Rock Falls' housing has undergone a remarkable transition in the last decade. From one of the most ill-housed communities in Illinois, the City has risen to above average. According to the 1960 U. S. Census of Housing there were 2,532, or 84 percent, out of a total of 3,009 housing units in Rock Falls that were considered standard--that is, in sound structures with all plumbing facilities. This proportion of standard housing contrasts sharply with the deplorable 51 percent of 1950. It also compares favorably with the 1960 figure of 78 percent for Sterling. Of Rock Falls' 477 substandard housing units in 1960, 59 lacked only hot water, and 132 had all plumbing facilities but were in deteriorating structures. Only 26 had no piped water at all, 65 had no flush toilets, 187 had no bathtub or shower, and 50 were dilapidated (see Table 11). Much of this improvement can be credited to the excellent program of extending sewer and water facilities to outlying areas of Rock Falls. It also reflects the strict and

TABLE 11

HOUSING CONDITIONS, ROCK FALLS, 1950-1960

	1950		1960	
	Number	Percent of All Housing Units	Number	Percent of All Housing Units
Total	2,324	100.0	3,009	100.0
Sound	2,049	88.2	2,740	91.6
With all plumbing Facilities	1,109	50.8	2,532	84.2
Lacking some plumbing facilities	940	37.4	208	7.4
Dilapidated and Deteriorating	203	8.7	269	9.4
Not Reporting	72	3.1	-	-

Source: U. S. Census of Housing.

long-overdue enforcement of the City's building code. Equally significant in raising the average housing quality were the 770 new, standard units built during the 1950's to shelter the City's swelling population.

It is interesting to note, therefore, that by 1960 about one-fourth of the City's housing units were less than ten years old. Demolition of older, substandard structures appears to be responsible for a relatively small part of the general upgrading. One consequence of recent home construction is that the proportion of owner-occupied units rose from 64 percent to 67 percent between 1950 and 1960.

Most of Rock Falls' new homes were built south of U. S. Route 30 on land that was annexed to the City during the 1950's. According to the census, their construction took place mainly in the early part of the decade. The Coloma Homes public housing development at the south end of the City accounted for 125 of the 542 housing units built in the five years from 1950 through 1954. During the next five years (1955-1959), however, only some 220 units were built in the City. Subsequent building-permit data reveals that the decline in home construction in Rock Falls has continued and even deepened into the early 1960's (see Table 12). This is no surprise, of course, and corresponds with the leveling off of the City's population growth that was noted earlier in Table 8.

TABLE 12

AGE OF HOUSING STRUCTURES, ROCK FALLS, 1960

Year Structure Built	Number		Percent of All Housing Units	
1955 to March 1960	230		7.6	
1950 to 1954	542		18.0	
Total		772		25.6
1940 to 1949	608		20.2	
1939 or Earlier	1,629		54.1	
		2,237		74.4
All Housing Units		3,009		100.0

Source: U. S. Census of Housing.

The availability of housing for sale or for rent in Rock Falls appears to be much closer to meeting the demand now than a decade ago. This can be readily appreciated by noting that according to the Census 56 standard units were available in 1960 contrasted with only 6 in 1950 (see Table 13).

TABLE 13

HOUSING OCCUPANCY, ROCK FALLS, 1950-1960

	1950		1960	
	Number	Percent of All Housing Units	Number	Percent of All Housing Units
ALL HOUSING UNITS	2,324	100.0	3,009	100.0
Occupied	2,293	98.5	2,884	95.8
By Owner	1,483	63.8	2,005	66.6
By Renter	810	34.7	879	29.2
Vacant	31	1.5	125	4.2
Available for Sale or for Rent with All Plumbing Facilities	6	0.3	56	1.9

Source: U. S. Census of Housing.

Based on a minimum projected population increase of about 2,600, from 13,911 in 1960 to 16,500 in 1970, and a continued average family size of 3.54, the number of additional housing units needed in the Rock Falls area in 1970 will be about 730. By subtracting the number of vacant lots inside the City that are already available and suitable for new construction, it can be estimated that 450 new home sites would be needed by 1970. Likewise, some 1,300 new home sites would be needed by 1980.

The City of Rock Falls should anticipate the provision of the various facilities needed to service these homes and the families who will be their occupants.

Some steps along this line are already being taken.

The Whiteside County Housing Authority has begun construction of 40 units of public housing on a 2.7 acre site west of Fourth Avenue and Seventh Street. They will add to those already under the Authority's administration at Coloma Homes. These additional units are specially designed for elderly persons. They will be available without regard to race or color to any Whiteside County resident who complies with the prevailing age and income requirements.

According to the 1960 Census of Population, the number of Negroes and other non-whites living in Rock Falls and Sterling is a negligible 95, or less than 1.0 percent--far below the average for cities of 10,000 or more outside the state's large metropolitan areas.

A further major government-sponsored program for upgrading housing quality is now being prepared in the Rock Falls Urban Renewal Project. It is planned for a 54 acre site bounded by Eighth Avenue on the west, Fifth Avenue on the east, U. S. Route 30 on the south, and Eleventh Street on the north. This area adjoins the planned Civic Center and Business Center developments with which it is designed to form a new central area for Rock Falls.

LAND USE

As a basic beginning step in preparing a comprehensive plan for Rock Falls, the exact use of each parcel of land in and around the City was determined through an intensive field survey in February, 1961. The results were then plotted on the Land Use Map. A similar map had been prepared from a field survey made in September, 1952.

A statistical analysis of the land use data was also undertaken, and the results, for both surveys, are set down in Table 14. This table shows and compares the actual amounts of land occupied by each use category.

A comparison of the results of the 1952 and 1961 field surveys shows that the basic makeup of Rock Falls has changed but little. Almost 140 acres were added to the corporate area through annexations, an increase of 11 percent. All land use categories but industry, quasi-public uses, and railroads shared in the increase. More than half, 78 acres, was for residential uses. Of significance here is that despite the threefold rise in multiple-family acreage, due entirely to the Coloma Homes public housing development, more than three-fourths of the increase was for single-family use.

Also significant was the substantial increase in park and playground area and the fact that relatively little of the annexed territory either was or remains vacant. Another gain was the reduction of the area in streets and alleys from almost 30 percent to just above 27 percent.

RESIDENTIAL PLAN

To fill the expected demand for 1,300 new housing sites if population growth in Rock Falls follows the path projected for the next 17 years, the following areas are recommended as those most suitable:

1. Northeast of the Industrial Park to Dixon Road and McNeill Road. This area is especially accessible to employment sources in the Industrial Park.

2. East of the Feeder Canal and north of Dixon Road. This area also is accessible to the Industrial Park. It lies near a proposed park and is circuited by the proposed secondary thoroughfare connecting East Second Street and McNeill Road.

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LEGEND

- SINGLE FAMILY DWELLINGS
- TWO FAMILY DWELLINGS
- MULTIPLE FAMILY DWELLINGS
- DWELLING OVER USE AS INDICATED
- TRAILERS
- RETAIL BUSINESS
- LIGHT INDUSTRY
- HEAVY INDUSTRY
- PARKS, PLAYGROUNDS & OTHER PUBLIC OPEN SPACES
- PUBLIC SCHOOLS & PUBLIC BUILDINGS
- CHURCHES, INSTITUTIONS & OTHER QUASI-PUBLIC USES
- CEMETERIES
- INTENSIVE PUBLIC USE
- VACANT LAND

LAND USE

REVISED: FEB. 1961

REPARATION OF THIS MAP WAS FINANCED
T THROUGH AN URBAN PLANNING GRANT
THE HOUSING & HOME FINANCE AGENCY
THE PROVISIONS OF SECTION 701 OF THE
OUSING ACT OF 1954, AS AMENDED

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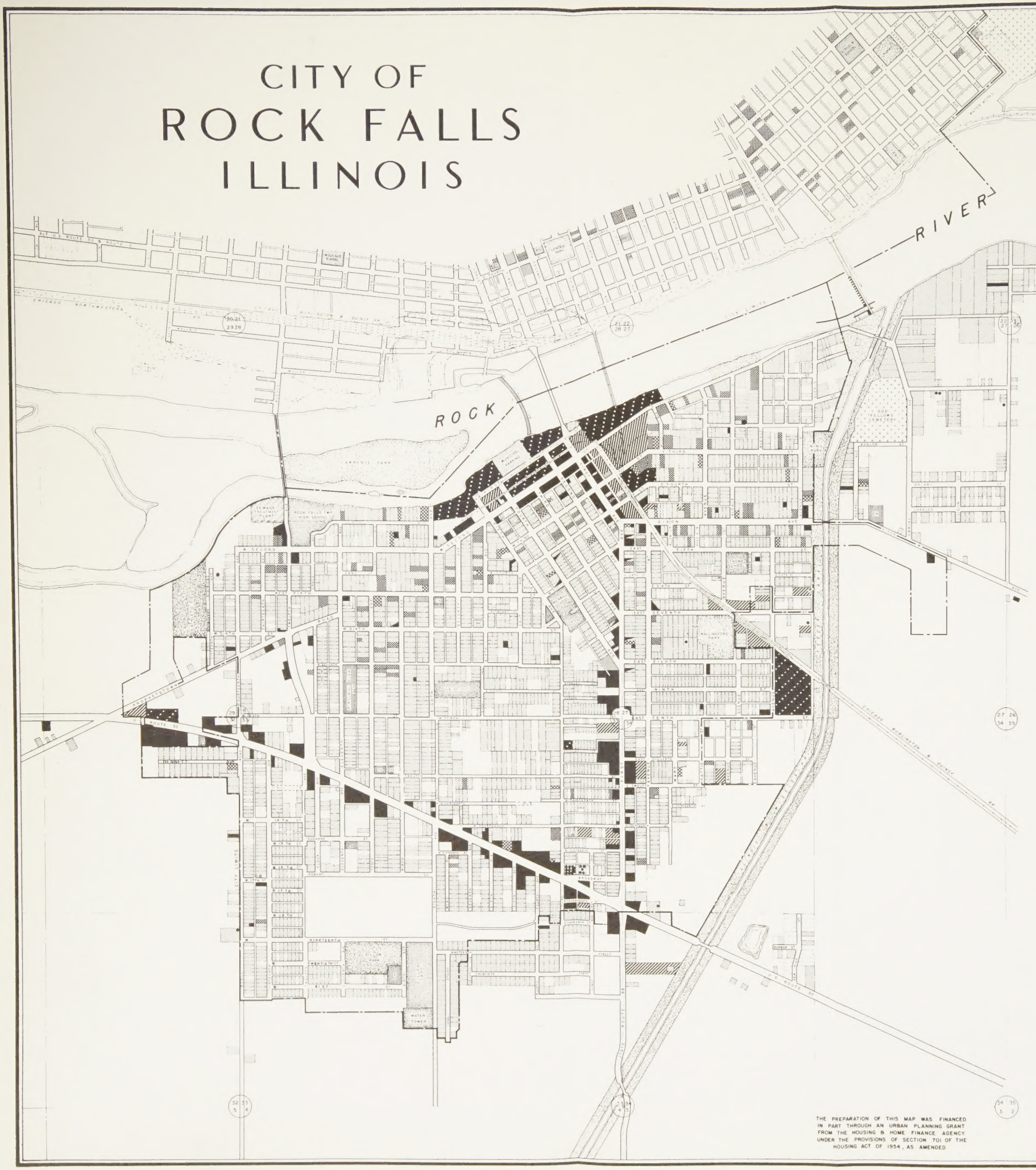
DIXON ILLINOIS

CITY OF ROCK FALLS ILLINOIS



LEGEND

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LAND USE

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TABLE 14

COMPARATIVE LAND USE AREAS, ROCK FALLS, 1952-1961

Use	February 1961		September 1952		Increase, 1952-1961	
	Area in Acres	% of Total Developed Area	Area in Acres	% of Total Developed Area	Area in Acres	Percent
Residential	544.7	56.4	466.8	55.2	77.9	17.0
Single-family	500.7	51.9	439.6	52.0	61.1	14.0
Two-family	25.5	2.6	21.4	2.5	4.1	19.0
Multiple-family	18.5	1.9	5.8	0.7	12.7	319.0
Business	45.9	4.7	32.7	3.8	13.2	40.0
Industry	40.1	4.1	40.3	4.8	-0.2	-1.0
Light industry	18.5	1.9	18.7	2.2	-0.2	-1.0
Heavy industry	21.6	2.2	21.6	2.6	-	-
Public Schools and Buildings	28.5	3.0	21.5	2.5	7.0	33.0
Quasi-Public (Private Schools, Churches, etc.)	8.9	0.9	8.9	1.0	-	-
Parks and Public Open Spaces	27.3	2.8	15.8	1.9	11.5	73.0
Streets and Alleys	261.7	27.1	251.8	29.8	9.9	4.0
Railroads	8.1	0.8	8.1	1.0	-	-
TOTAL DEVELOPED AREA	965.2	100.0	845.9	100.0	119.3	14.0
Vacant Land	308.3	22.8[1]/	291.3	25.6[1]/	17.0	6.0
TOTAL LAND AREA	1,273.5	100.0	1,137.2	100.0	136.3	12.0
Water Area	79.1		78.2		0.9	1.0
TOTAL CORPORATE AREA	1,352.6		1,215.4		137.2	11.0

1/ Percent of Total Land Area.

Source: Land Use Field Surveys by Evert Kincaid and Associates, Inc.

3. West of the Feeder Canal around the proposed southwest bypass. This area, already the location of numerous new homes, is thought to be the most likely site of future residential growth.

4. The Urban Renewal Project in the area north of U.S. Route 30 between Third Avenue and Eighth Avenue.

5. The Public-Housing-for-the-Elderly Project at Fourth Avenue and Seventh Street.

SCHOOLS AND PARKS PLAN

As residential growth proceeds, facilities such as schools and parks should be planned to be an integral part of the new and growing neighborhood communities.

Proposed school and park locations are shown on the Development Plans. It is emphasized, however, that these sites are approximate and subject to future change as the direction and density of population growth becomes more definite.

The projected population increase of 5,600 by 1980 will most likely generate the need for new elementary school classrooms to accommodate 1,100 additional pupils. These should be built both as additions to existing schools and as parts of new schools. Four new classrooms are already under construction at the overcrowded Dillon School; others may soon be needed at the Thome School, which is already near capacity. The recommended site for a new building is at Fourteenth Avenue and Prophetstown Road, at the west City limits. This property is already owned by the local school district. As a reserve against even more than anticipated population growth a school site southwest of the City should be purchased. Similar foresight is needed to assure eventual expansion of the East Coloma School east of Rock Falls.

At the present time Rock Falls enjoys the adequate park and playground system so essential for a balanced community. It is recommended that future park areas be developed on joint sites with the schools so that they can serve together as the center of neighborhood recreational activities both for children and adults.

New park facilities totaling at least 20 acres will be needed, however, in the next few years. Recommended sites are:

1. Near U. S. Route 30 at the west City limits;

2. Northeast of the City near the Second Street-McNeill Road extension; and

CITY OF ROCK FALLS ILLINOIS

NERAL LOPMENT PLAN

APRIL, 1962

STING LIMITED MANUFACTURING
POSED LIMITED MANUFACTURING
STING GENERAL MANUFACTURING
POSED GENERAL MANUFACTURING
STING PARKS & PLAYGROUNDS
POSED PARKS & PLAYGROUNDS
STING PUBLIC SCHOOLS & BUILDINGS
POSED PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS
SI-PUBLIC USES

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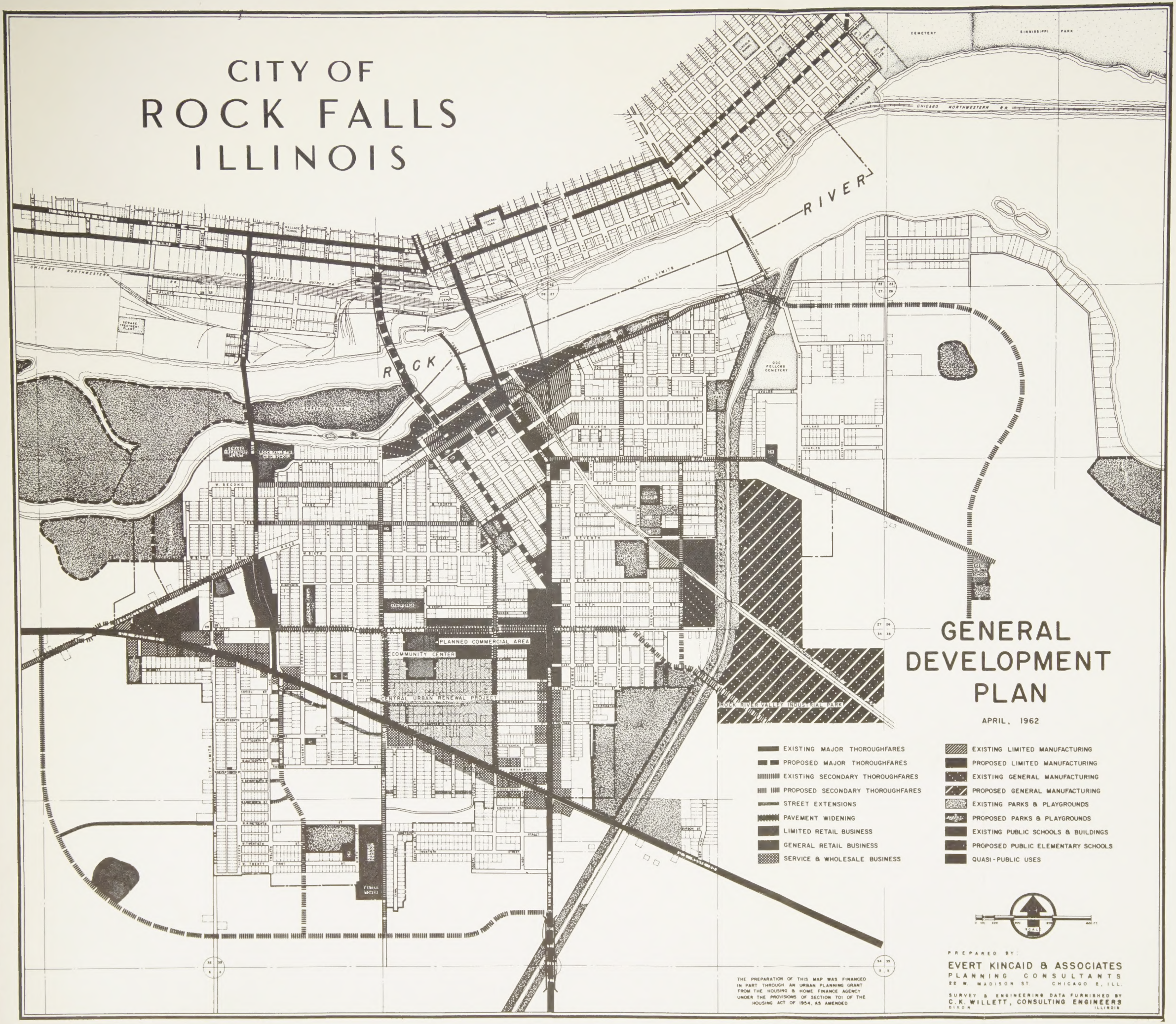
ENGINEERING DATA FURNISHED BY
LETT, CONSULTING ENGINEERS
ILLINOIS

CITY OF ROCK FALLS ILLINOIS



GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

APRIL, 1962

- EXISTING MAJOR THOROUGHFARES
- PROPOSED MAJOR THOROUGHFARES
- EXISTING SECONDARY THOROUGHFARES
- PROPOSED SECONDARY THOROUGHFARES
- STREET EXTENSIONS
- PAVEMENT WIDENING
- LIMITED RETAIL BUSINESS
- GENERAL RETAIL BUSINESS
- SERVICE & WHOLESALE BUSINESS
- EXISTING LIMITED MANUFACTURING
- PROPOSED LIMITED MANUFACTURING
- EXISTING GENERAL MANUFACTURING
- PROPOSED GENERAL MANUFACTURING
- EXISTING PARKS & PLAYGROUNDS
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- EXISTING PUBLIC SCHOOLS & BUILDINGS
- PROPOSED PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS
- QUASI-PUBLIC USES

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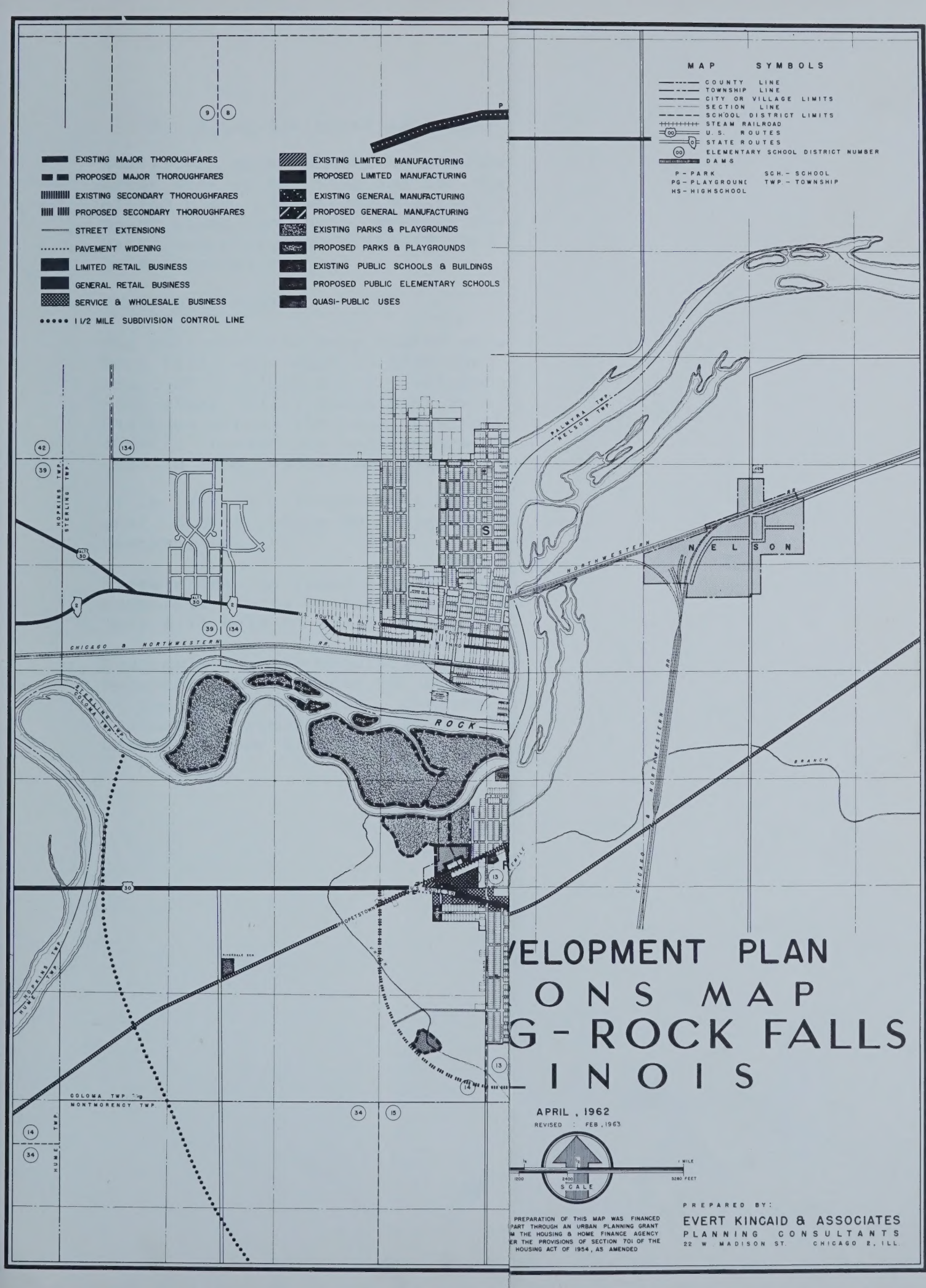
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STREET EXTENSIONS
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1 1/2 MILE SUBDIVISION CONTROL LINE
EXISTING LIMITED MANUFACTURING
PROPOSED LIMITED MANUFACTURING
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EXISTING PARKS & PLAYGROUNDS
PROPOSED PARKS & PLAYGROUNDS
EXISTING PUBLIC SCHOOLS & BUILDINGS
PROPOSED PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS
QUASI-PUBLIC USES
MAP SYMBOLS
COUNTY LINE
TOWNSHIP LINE
CITY OR VILLAGE LIMITS
SECTION LINE
SCHOOL DISTRICT LIMITS
STEAM RAILROAD
U.S. ROUTES
STATE ROUTES
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT NUMBER
DAMS
P - PARK
PG - PLAYGROUND
HS - HIGH SCHOOL
SCH. - SCHOOL
TWP. - TOWNSHIP
PALMYRA TWP.
NELSON TWP.
HOPKINS TWP.
STERLING TWP.
NELSON
NORTHWESTERN
CHICAGO & NORTHWESTERN RR
ROCK
COLOMA TWP.
PROPETSTOWN
MONTMORENCY TWP.
HUME TWP.
BRANCH
VELOPMENT PLAN
ONS MAP
G-ROCK FALLS
LINOIS
APRIL, 1962
REVISED : FEB., 1963
SCALE
1200
2400
3200 FEET
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QUASI-PUBLIC USES

MAP SYMBOLS

COUNTY LINE
TOWNSHIP LINE
CITY OR VILLAGE LIMITS
SECTION LINE
SCHOOL DISTRICT LIMITS
STEAM RAILROAD
U.S. ROUTES
STATE ROUTES
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT NUMBER
DAMS

P - PARK
PG - PLAYGROUND
HS - HIGHSCHOOL
SCH - SCHOOL
TWP - TOWNSHIP

PROPOSED EXPRESSWAY

S T E R L I N G

R O C K F A L L S

ROCK RIVER

WHITESIDE COUNTY
LEE COUNTY

N E L S O N

CHICAGO & NORTHWESTERN R.R.

HOPKINS TWP
STERLING TWP
COLOMA TWP
MONTMORENCY TWP
PALMYRA TWP
NELSON TWP

YEOWARD ADD

AREA DEVELOPMENT PLAN
ENVIRONS MAP
STERLING - ROCK FALLS
ILLINOIS

APRIL, 1962
REVISED FEB., 1963

SCALE

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3. Along the river at Avenue B.

Additional parks should be planned for the riverside and island areas west of the City and for the shore of Sinnissippi Lake east of the City. A further possibility is the 40-acre city-owned tract along the canal, between Twelfth Street and U. S. Route 30. Parks and playgrounds should also be planned as parts of the City's Urban Renewal Project.

INDUSTRIAL PLAN

The most decisive move toward assuring the industrial future of Rock Falls was taken in 1962 when the City purchased a 173 acre tract of farmland for a development to be known as the "Rock Falls-Rock River Valley Industrial Park." It lies along the Burlington Railroad across the canal southeast of the City. The site is ideally located for both general and limited manufacturing with access to both railway and highway traffic.

It is part of a larger belt of land straddling the railway southeast to U. S. Route 30, which should be reserved for long-range industrial use.

Steps should be taken to place the Industrial Park within the City's corporate limits so that as manufacturing firms move into the area they will help to swell the municipal tax base.

Favorable limited manufacturing sites also exist in the triangle bounded by U. S. Route 30, Prophetstown Road and Fourteenth Avenue at the City's west end. Continuing moves should also be made to utilize the remaining abandoned International Harvester buildings between Second Street and the river.

CIVIC CENTER

The present City Hall and Fire Department are housed in a structure that is substandard and needs to be replaced. Originally built in 1868 and renovated in the 1900's, its cracking walls and settling foundation are virtually beyond repair. The first floor administrative offices are all housed in one room and lack the layout, space, and privacy needed for efficient conduct of the City's business. The second floor council chamber is also inadequate and unsafe and presents an equally poor house in which to do business.

The trend in developing modern municipal office facilities is to provide as many services as possible on one site with the various units of government separated but easily accessible to each other. The newest trend has been toward developing a comprehensive civic center that would include, in addition to administrative offices, the police and fire departments and such facilities as an auditorium, library, meeting halls and court rooms.

As in other public gathering places, a civic center must furnish adequate parking for both employees and visitors. In addition to space required for buildings, parking and driveways, sufficient land must be devoted to landscaping--as a means of properly spotlighting the civic center as the "home" of the community.

A special committee to study the feasibility of a civic center development in Rock Falls was set up by the Mayor in June 1961. Plans have since been drawn and approved, and a $350,000 bond issue to finance the undertaking has been sold. The plans envisage an Administrative Building, which will include the City Hall, police department, fire station, and a youth and social center. The latter is to be financed through private subscriptions totaling an additional $90,000.00.

The site selected for the Rock Falls Civic Center is on the south side of Tenth Street between Sixth Avenue and Eighth Avenue. It meets the need for a compact tract of five or more acres, a location that would be central and accessible, and compatibility with adjoining land uses.

The site covers seven acres, sufficiently large enough to accommodate the buildings and the auxiliary facilities such as off-street parking and service drives. In addition there is sufficient depth so that the parking areas and driveways can be placed without detracting from the aesthetic beauty of the development.

The site is centrally located and easily accessible. Almost without exception the civic centers of other cities have been located

in or adjoining their traditional central business districts. The Rock Falls location, however, has been selected more with regard to the prevailing growth pattern of the City. It is, therefore, somewhat southwest of the City's present business and population center.

The proposed site is also accessible via the secondary thoroughfares Eighth Avenue and Tenth Street. A further advantage is that access to the site does not interfere with major thoroughfares such as First Avenue and U. S. Route 30. This all adds up to a location that may be conveniently reached by the City's population.

The Civic Center site lies at the heart of Rock Falls' future central area, which will develop as the City grows southwestward. The Center is thus planned to tie in with the urban renewal area on the south and the City's proposed new business district on the east. It is deliberately kept out of the business center itself because such a large, non-retail development would interrupt the continuity of business frontage.

The pleasing appearance and high quality of these neighboring properties will place the Civic Center in an aesthetic and highly compatible surrounding.

The selected site is also economically feasible, there being few other centrally located areas where an adequate sized tract can be assembled without heavy demolition and acquisition expenses. To enlarge the site at the present City Hall, for example, would be far too costly.

NEW BUSINESS CENTER

The relocation of Rock Falls' Central Business District is seen as the only basic solution to the poor standing of the City's retail trade. The present location is closely ringed by industrial areas and railroad tracks on the north and east and by residential neighborhoods on the southwest. This makes expansion of shopping facilities virtually impossible. The only direction open to expansion--southeast along First Avenue--has been cut off by a series of gasoline stations.

As predicted in the 1954 Comprehensive Plan, the present downtown area has long since lost most of its quality merchandising and soft goods establishments to Sterling and now specializes in services and hard goods. It has a generally run-down, has-been look. It is proposed, therefore, that this deterioration of the City's business life be reversed by a deliberate and ambitious plan to develop a new business center along Tenth Street between the proposed Civic Center and Fifth Avenue.

This site, like that for the Civic Center, would conform with the present and expected growth of the City to the south and west. A modern shopping center there would have the clothing, variety and other soft goods establishments characteristic of a mature downtown area and would help bring to Rock Falls a more equitable share of the total area retail sales.

To facilitate the development of the new business center, two additional business districts have been suggested in the rezoning study presently being undertaken by the Plan Commission. The purpose in creating these new zoning districts is to encourage modern, efficient retail development with proper standards for insuring the unrestricted interchange of customers within the shopping complex, thus promoting shopper convenience and business prosperity.

The 1954 plan had called for shifting the City's main business area to First Avenue between Eighth and Fifteenth Streets. A number of establishments such as supermarkets and gasoline stations have since been built there, to some extent dispersing and interrupting the possible development of a high-grade shopping nucleus. In the meantime, too, the southwestward population shift has continued and the need for a Civic Center and an Urban Renewal Project has crystallized. The Tenth Street Business Center plan is now, therefore, recommended as that having the best chance for success.

THOROUGHFARE PLAN

The objectives of comprehensive thoroughfare planning include:

1. Provision for routes between areas or places not previously connected;

2. Elimination or reduction of congestion and safety hazards;

3. Provision for more direct, shorter routes;

4. Bypassing of through traffic around congested areas;

5. Elimination or reduction of through traffic in residential neighborhoods;

6. Integration with other comprehensive planning elements such as school sites, shopping centers, and industrial districts.

Major and secondary thoroughfares, both existing and proposed, are shown on the Development Plans. The major thoroughfares are through-routes; the secondary thoroughfares are either connecting routes between major thoroughfares or collector routes for sizeable community areas.

The present traffic-circulation pattern of Rock Falls is based primarily on north-south cross-river traffic with Sterling, and secondarily on east-west cross-country traffic along U. S. Route 30. Movement between Rock Falls and Sterling averages about 24,000 vehicles per day, with 75 percent on the First Avenue (Illinois Route 88) bridge and 25 percent on the Twelfth Avenue bridge. First Avenue traffic volume is by far the heaviest of any street in Rock Falls. It remains heavy through the downtown area and then steadily falls off until at U. S. Route 30 it is less than half that on the bridge.

The only other streets carrying significant, although smaller, amounts of traffic are Second Street, Fifth Street, Dixon Avenue and Prophetstown Road.

The First Avenue bridge is both a link between the business centers of Rock Falls and Sterling and a path for through-traffic following Route 88. The passage of non-stop traffic through the downtown areas is on the whole detrimental to business activity because of the resulting congestion.

The Twelfth Avenue bridge serves mainly as a link between Rock Falls and the riverfront industrial belt in Sterling. It also is an alternate route for traffic between Sterling and Route 30.

The cardinal feature of any thoroughfare plan for Rock Falls must be relief of the excessive traffic volume on First Avenue, particularly north of Dixon Avenue and on the Rock River bridge. A second feature must be to ease or divert the passage of through-traffic on Route 30, which at First Avenue now averages more than 10,000 vehicles per day.

The first steps toward achievement of these goals are already being taken. They are:

1. Construction of an overpass on Avenue G in Sterling to carry traffic to and from the Twelfth Avenue bridge over the Burlington railroad tracks; and

2. Reconstruction of Route 30 to a four-lane width between the canal and Prophetstown Road.

Both projects are being undertaken by the Illinois Division of Highways.

Unfortunately, the new overpass in Sterling is being built without access ramps to east-west cross streets between the river and the railroad. Rock Falls motorists who work at the Northwestern Steel and Wire plant consequently will have to drive several blocks farther north to Sterling's Third Street and Fourth Street and then double back over a grade crossing. This will hardly improve either the journey to work for Rock Falls millworkers or traffic congestion on two of Sterling's busiest thoroughfares.

Elimination of traffic tieups caused by trains blocking the present railroad grade crossing in Sterling is expected to speed traffic over the Twelfth Avenue bridge, however. Whether this will relieve some of the overload on the First Avenue bridge remains to be seen. In any event, the relief will be limited and most likely temporary.

It is recommended, therefore, that another bridge be built across the river. It should be located to serve the dual purpose of facilitating both local traffic between Rock Falls and Sterling and non-stop traffic on Route 88.

The best location for the bridge, if foundation conditions are suitable, would be from Fourth Avenue in Rock Falls to Avenue B in Sterling. This could be easily worked into a one-way system with First Avenue and the old bridge northbound and Fourth Avenue and the new bridge southbound.

An alternate route connecting Avenue B in Rock Falls with Sixth Avenue in Sterling would be superior in improving access to the industrial park from eastern Sterling. It would not, however, satisfactorily relieve the traffic load on Route 88. Another alternate route east of the existing bridge is between Avenue F in Rock Falls and Broadway in Sterling. Because this bridge would have to be tied in with a new road to be built along the canal to Routes 30 and 88 its high cost in relation to traffic relief would be practically prohibitive.

It is further recommended that the narrow, sharp-curving Route 88 bridge over the canal just south of the City be replaced by a wide and straight modern structure.

Projected pavement widening and channelization of turning movements at intersections will greatly ease both local and through traffic on Route 30. Major intersection improvements should be undertaken at Prophetstown Road, Twelfth Avenue, Eighth Avenue and First Avenue. The one at Prophetstown Road would result in the highways crossing each other at or near right angles. Proper traffic channelization would be essential at the busy First Avenue junction. Reconstruction of Route 30 would also provide for limited-access frontage roads to serve business establishments on either side of the highway.

It should be realized that this modernization will be a mixed blessing, especially in view of the recent and expected growth of the City south of the highway, which already acts as a barrier to cross-movement of vehicles and pedestrians. It is recommended, therefore, that plans be made for construction of a bypass expressway for Route 30. The bypass should start east of the proposed industrial development southeast of Rock Falls, and, swinging southward, rejoin Route 30 near the Rock River bridge one and one-half miles west of the City. Final determination of this project's feasibility must await analysis of new traffic patterns and loads encountered after the current work on Route 30 is complete.

A number of improvements are also proposed for the secondary thoroughfare system of Rock Falls. This requires that several streets be designated as those for which future expenditures on such work items as pavement widening and resurfacing, intersection straightening, and installation of stop signs and other control devices should be concentrated.

It is recommended that among existing streets these secondary thoroughfares include Second Street, Fifth Street, Dixon Avenue, Tenth Street, Prophetstown Road, Flock Avenue, Eleventh Avenue, Eighth Avenue, and Avenue B (see General Development Plan).

The recommended major improvements are:

1. Extension of Second Street to connect with McNeill Road;

2. Construction of a circling connector street between Route 30 on the west and Route 88 on the south; and

3. Extension of Flock Street to connect with Eleventh Avenue.

Plans by the City, township and county for construction of a road and a canal bridge to connect Tenth Avenue and Avenue D with the Industrial Park and McNeill Road are already completed. A connection with Avenue D and Tenth Street should be added.

Other recommended improvements include curbs and gutters along Tenth Street, Fourth Avenue, Eighth Avenue, Flock Avenue, and Avenue D, and storm sewers under Tenth Street. Traffic lights should be installed at First Avenue and Route 30, First Avenue and Tenth Street, and Route 30 and Twelfth Avenue. The only existing traffic lights are at First Avenue and Second Street and First Avenue and Third Street in downtown Rock Falls.

In order to improve access to residential neighborhoods on the southwest side, it is further recommended that several streets--Fourteenth, Fifteenth, Sixteenth, Seventeenth, and Eighteenth--be extended east to Flock Avenue. Nineteenth Street should be extended west to the proposed southwest collector street.

In order to remove some local traffic from Route 30 it is recommended that Coviel Street be extended east to Eighth Avenue and Fifteenth Street be extended east to Third Avenue. A new local street between Third Avenue and Eighth Avenue south of Route 30 is also recommended.

Another recommended improvement is the eventual renaming of either the numbered streets or numbered avenues in order to avoid the confusion that is now all too common.

IMPLEMENTATION

Community planning is initiated primarily to promote and to protect the public health, safety, and general welfare. It also is important in assisting the orderly development of the community's economy and in assuring the necessary public services and educational, cultural, and recreational amenities. These goals can best be achieved by controlling and guiding the community's physical development, particularly through provision of transport facilities and regulation of land use.

THE OFFICIAL PLAN

As a basic tool of implementation, the Development Plans described and mapped in this report outline the proposed thoroughfare system and general pattern of land use. They include all planning proposals, considered in relation to present and anticipated conditions, and organize them into a logical plan for the future growth of Rock Falls.

In themselves, however, these plans have no binding force in accomplishing the desired results. They must be supplemented and implemented by regulatory ordinances and local initiative in construction activity, both public and private. Only if all these forces are brought into play can a better community environment be achieved.

The first step is the adoption by the City Council of the plans and text included herein as the "Official Plan of the City of Rock Falls." This action would give legal status to the Development Plans and recognize them as the proper basis for legislation and other public action relating to City development.

The studies made for preparation of the development plans, both for the 1954 report and this present one, have already been used as the basis for the two implementing ordinances prepared as part of the planning program--the revised subdivision regulations and the suggested comprehensive amendment to the zoning ordinance (now under study). They have also complemented preparation of the City's Urban Renewal Program.

PUBLIC WORKS AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM

The most visible results of planning are found in the initiation and completion of public works. Successful achievement of such projects requires an orderly program, with priorities given to those most needed, either in themselves or as a base for other, longer range, projects.

A city's public works program must not only be property staged but must be coordinated with the plans of other public agencies such as the Federal, State, and County governments and the local township and school-district authorities. It should be planned in such a way as to take advantage of funds available from these and other cooperating agencies.

The need for a particular project is, of course, the basic consideration in formulating a public works program. The ability and willingness of the city to pay for each project, however, must govern the final decisions. The city's financial ability is largely dependent on the strength of its economic base--which is reflected through license fees and tax, community facility, and utility revenues, as well as through the sale of municipal bonds. The city's willingness depends upon the degree to which its citizens are convinced that the proposed projects will benefit them.

The necessary money for a public improvements program must come mainly from three basic sources; State Motor Fuel Tax, City Sales Tax, and General Obligation Bonds.

The use of Motor Fuel Tax receipts is restricted by the State of Illinois to certain principal streets in Rock Falls. Sales Tax receipts from the State, however, go into the City's general funds. Together, these two sources could furnish more than $1.4 million in the next decade (see Table 15). This is notwithstanding the $13,000 in 1963 Sales Tax revenues scheduled to pay off the balance of $55,000 borrowed from the Whiteside County Housing Authority in 1959 for construction of sanitary sewers.

The expected growth of Rock Falls' assessed valuation will lead to a proportionate increase in the City's bonding limit, or the maximum amount that the State would permit to be issued in General Obligation Bonds. The City's bonded indebtedness in 1952 totaled $530,000. This consisted of two General Obligation Bond issues--one for sewers, issued in October, 1949, the other for the Civic Center, issued in October, 1962.

Still, the City's bonding power, or unused part of its bonding limit, totaled about $480,000. This sum will grow at a rapid rate as assessed valuation increases and the outstanding bonds are retired (see Table 16).

It is clear, therefore, that a modest program of public improvements is easily within the means of the City of Rock Falls.

The same can be said of School District 13. The school authorities floated a $175,000 General Obligation Bond issue in November 1962 in order to finance construction of the Dillon School addi-

tion and a new Junior High School gymnasium. This sum, however, is but a small part of the District's bonding limit, which is even greater than that of the City.

The list following Tables 15 and 16 cites, according to type, proposed public improvements for the Rock Falls area. Included are estimated costs and suggested sources of revenue. Each project can be identified on the Development Plans. They are proposed in two stages--one is for the immediate future; the other is a long-range program.

TABLE 15

PAST AND PROJECTED REVENUES FROM MOTOR FUEL AND SALES TAXES

1960-1972

Year[1]/	Motor Fuel Tax Revenues[2]/	Municipal Sales Tax Revenues[3]/	Total Revenues from State
1960	$ 56,766	$ 49,586	$ 106,352
1961	57,414	50,880	108,294
1962	57,645	55,380	113,025
1963	58,700	58,960	117,660
1964	59,755	62,870	122,625
1965	60,815	67,105	127,920
1966	61,880	71,340	133,220
1967	62,945	75,575	138,520
1968	64,010	80,135	144,145
1969	65,080	84,695	149,775
1970	66,150	89,580	155,730
1971	67,225	94,470	161,695
1972	68,300	99,680	167,980
TOTAL, 1963-1972	$634,860	$784,410	$1,419,270

1/ Fiscal year ended April 30.
2/ Actual official figures for 1960-1962; estimates for 1963 and later based on projection of 1950-1960 U. S. annual average population increase of 1.85 percent.
3/ Actual official figures for 1960-1962; estimates for 1963 and later based on projected increase in retail sales.

TABLE 16

PAST AND PROJECTED ASSESSED VALUATION, BONDING LIMIT, AND BONDING POWER, CITY OF ROCK FALLS - 1958-1972

Year	Assessed Valuation[1]	Bonding Limit[2]	Bonds Payable	Bonding Power[3]
1958	$19,031,017	$ 951,551	$300,000[4]	$651,551
1959	19,766,625	988,331	270,000	718,331
1960	19,910,476	995,524	240,000	755,524
1961	19,952,910	997,645	210,000	787,645
1962	20,190,000	1,009,500	530,000[5]	479,500
1963	20,430,000	1,021,500	500,000	521,500
1964	20,675,000	1,033,750	460,000	573,750
1965	20,925,000	1,046,250	420,000	626,250
1966	21,175,000	1,058,750	380,000	678,750
1967	21,430,000	1,071,500	340,000	731,500
1968	21,685,000	1,084,250	300,000	784,250
1969	21,945,000	1,097,250	280,000	817,250
1970	22,210,000	1,110,500	260,000	850,500
1971	22,475,000	1,123,750	240,000	883,750
1972	22,745,000	1,137,250	220,000	917,250

1/ Actual official figures for 1958-1961; estimates for 1962 and later based on projected continuation of 1958-1961 average annual increase of 1.2 percent per year.
2/ Five percent of assessed valuation.
3/ Difference between bonding limit and bonds payable.
4/ Includes balance remaining of $540,000 sewers bond issue, October, 1949.
5/ Includes $350,000 Civic Center bond issue, October, 1962.

SUGGESTED PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM

FIRST STAGE

Proposed Project	Estimated Cost*	Suggested Source of Revenue
Bridges		
1. First Avenue Canal Bridge	$ 250,000	State of Illinois
2. Eleventh Street Canal Bridge	325,000	Whiteside County, Coloma Township, Motor Fuel Tax
Streets and Thoroughfares		
1. Eighth Avenue, from Tenth Street to U. S. Route 30: Widen and resurface and install curbs and gutters	27,000	Motor Fuel Tax, General Funds
2. Tenth Street, from Twelfth Avenue to Eleventh Street extension: Widen and resurface, install storm sewers, curbs and gutters, and realign major intersections	166,000	Motor Fuel Tax, General Funds
3. Prophetstown Road, from Twelfth Avenue to southwest bypass: Widen and resurface	81,000	Motor Fuel Tax
4. Fifth Avenue and Fifth Street: Realign intersection	1,000	General Funds
5. Fifth Avenue, from Fifth Street to U. S. Route 30: Widen and resurface and install curbs and gutters	54,000	General Funds

*Includes construction costs only.

SUGGESTED PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM--Continued

Proposed Project	Estimated Cost	Suggested Source of Revenue
Traffic Signals		
1. First Avenue-U.S.Route 30	$ 25,000	Motor Fuel Tax
2. First Avenue-Tenth Street	20,000	Motor Fuel Tax
3. Twelfth Avenue-U.S. Route 30	20,000	Motor Fuel Tax
Parks and Schools		
1. Acquire land for southwest school site - 10 acres	15,000	School District No. 13, General Obligation Bonds
2. Acquire land for East Coloma school expansion and park site - 8 acres	12,000	School District No. 13, General Obligation Bonds
3. Acquire land for far-northeast park site - 12 acres	15,000	Coloma Park District
4. Acquire land for eastern riverside park site - 50 to 60 acres	75,000	Coloma Park District
5. Acquire land for western riverside park site - 40 to 50 acres	75,000	Coloma Park District
6. Acquire land for Avenue B riverside park site - 3 acres	5,000	Coloma Park District
Central Area Project		
Civic Center	350,000	General Obligation Bonds

SUGGESTED PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM--Continued

SECOND STAGE

Proposed Project	Estimated Cost	Suggested Source of Revenue
Bridges		
1. Fourth Avenue River Bridge	$1,500,000	State of Illinois, Motor Fuel Tax, General Obligation Bonds
2. Second Street Canal Bridge	250,000	Whiteside County, Coloma Township Motor Fuel Tax
Streets and Thoroughfares		
1. Avenue D, from Dixon Avenue to Eleventh Street Canal Bridge approach: Widen, resurface, and extend, and install curbs and gutters	83,000	Motor Fuel Tax, General Funds
2. Connect Eleventh Avenue and Flock Avenue and extend to southwest bypass; install curbs and gutters	85,000	General Funds, Motor Fuel Tax
3. Connect Second Street and McNeill Road	230,000	General Funds, Motor Fuel Tax
4. Connect First Avenue and U.S. Route 30 via southwest bypass	525,000	General Funds, Motor Fuel Tax
5. Fourth Avenue, First Avenue to proposed Rock River bridge: Widen and resurface and install curbs and gutters	54,000	State of Illinois, Motor Fuel Tax
6. Extend Fourteenth Street from Twelfth Avenue to Flock Avenue	5,500	General Funds
7. Extend Fifteenth Street from Twelfth Avenue to Flock Avenue and from Seventh Avenue to Third Avenue	53,000	General Funds

SUGGESTED PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM--Continued

Proposed Project	Estimated Cost	Suggested Source of Revenue
8. Extend Sixteenth Street from Twelfth Avenue to Flock Avenue	$ 5,500	General Funds
9. Extend Seventeenth Street from Twelfth Avenue to Flock Avenue and from Eighth Avenue to Fourth Avenue	55,000	General Funds
10. Extend Eighteenth Street from Twelfth Avenue to Flock Avenue	11,000	General Funds
11. Extend Nineteenth Street from Fourteenth Avenue to southwest bypass	64,000	General Funds, Motor Fuel Tax
12. Extend Coviel Street from Twelfth Avenue to Eighth Avenue	64,000	General Funds
13. Construct U. S. Route 30 bypass expressway from Nelson Township line to Rock River bridge and Hopkins Township line.		State of Illinois

ADMINISTRATION

Successful implementation of the foregoing Development Plans will be the outcome of proper administrative action and organization--especially in enforcement of the appropriate regulating ordinances.

Public understanding of the needs, aims and methods of the planning program must also be achieved in order to fulfill the Development Plans. The public should be promptly informed of all changes in the plans and of the proceedings regarding the plans. They should be invited, through citizens' advisory committees and group activities, to participate in realizing the planning program. Since major public improvement projects must have public approval, either by referendum or through their Councilmen, a well-informed citizenry is the most effective means of securing the necessary support.

The Development Plans presented in this report should not be thought of as final in all their details and objectives. Changing conditions which cannot now be foreseen may warrant changes in these plans from time to time. Such changes, of course, should be made only after careful study, according to the law and in a democratic manner.

Planning must be a continuing process. It requires the persistent collection of information pertinent to periodic planning reviews and, if necessary, amendment of planning laws. Only then can planners, administrators, and the general public keep abreast of changing conditions and maintain control of their city's future growth and development.

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